



*News Release from Congressman*

# ROB SIMMONS

SECOND DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

[WWW.HOUSE.GOV/SIMMONS](http://WWW.HOUSE.GOV/SIMMONS)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
TUESDAY, APRIL 04, 2006

CONTACT: JOHN GOODWIN  
202/812-1341

## SIMMONS PUSHES FOR STRONGER PORT SECURITY

### *House Homeland Security Committee Receives Testimony On SAFE Port Act*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District, and the House Homeland Security Committee received testimony today during a hearing on the “Security and Accountability For Every (SAFE) Port Act.” The act, introduced by Reps. Dan Lungren (R-CA) and Jane Harman (D-CA) and cosponsored by Simmons, authorizes \$821 million annually to prevent terror threats from reaching the United States, track and protect containers en route, and harden security at U.S. ports.

“Our ports receive hundreds of ships a day from overseas,” said Simmons. “It is important for authorities to know who is working the secure areas of the ports, where the cargo originated, what is in the cargo and who might be aboard the ship. This legislation addresses the need for comprehensive port security and ensuring the safety of the American people.”

Among other provisions, the bill will:

- Require DHS to conduct terrorist watch-list checks of all port employees with access to secure areas;
- Ensure containers are scanned for radiation overseas before they reach U.S. shores;
- Provide risk-based funding through a dedicated Port Security Grant Program to harden U.S. ports against terrorist attacks and enhance capabilities to respond to attacks and resume operations;
- Require the Secretary of DHS to develop protocols for resuming trade after a transportation security incident.

During the questioning session that included U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security Deputy Secretary Michael P. Jackson, Simmons re-iterated his concern for how DHS parcels port security funding to the states.

Simmons said, “With 361 ports in America all fighting for a share of the pie, and a vast portion of the allocation going to the large ports in New York, Long Beach and elsewhere, ports like New London are often left without. Eastern Connecticut is home to a U.S. Naval Submarine Base, U.S. Coast Guard Research Center and the USCG Academy, two major airports, five nuclear reactors, a major pharmaceutical global research center and a major East Coast shipping port – not to mention all the trappings of I-95 as a major transportation infrastructure entity. Indeed, no other district between New York and Boston contains such a combination of sensitive assets. We need to ensure that smaller, but no less important ports are protected as well.”

The SAFE Port Act is companion legislation to the “GreenLane Maritime Cargo Security Act” introduced by Sens. Susan Collins (R-ME), Patty Murray (D-WA), Norm Coleman (R-MN), and Joe Lieberman (D-CT).

Simmons concluded, “Since 9/11, it has become increasingly important to secure all means of entry into the United States from those that wish to do us harm and the tools they may use to do so. This bill is timely and will go a long way in shoring up U.S. port security to prevent dangerous people or materials from coming ashore on U.S. soil.”

Text of the SAFE Port Act and comprehensive background information are available at [www.house.gov/chs](http://www.house.gov/chs)